

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Miller: Broaden Tax Incentives to Encourage Film Producers to Use CT Locations



Connecticut's economy would receive a significant boost if more movie and television producers could be persuaded to shoot their films here, said state Representative Lawrence G. Miller, R-122nd District, who has introduced legislation (House Bill 5492) to expand the tax exemptions the state currently provides for media productions.

"Both 20th Century Fox and Crossroads Films are planning movies whose stories are set in Connecticut but plan to shoot their films at New York locations because the Empire State offers more attractive tax incentives," Representative Miller said.

"Filmmakers from Hollywood and elsewhere in the country spend millions when they shoot their films at non-studio locations around the country," Representative Miller said. "While Connecticut has benefited from some movie and television productions that have been shot here, such as the scenes from Steven Spielberg's 'War of the Worlds' remake that were filmed in Naugatuck, we could be far more attractive to the major studios if we broadened the tax incentives for media productions that we currently offer."

"Connecticut is strategically located halfway between Boston and New York City and offers a wide range of rural, urban, shoreline and historic and cultural sites – such as Mystic Seaport and the Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford - that could be of considerable interest to movie and television producers," Representative Miller said. "Unfortunately, although more than \$2 billion is spent on New York City productions every year, nearly all movies, television shows and commercials are shot within a 25 mile radius of Columbus Circle in Manhattan. That is because producers have little incentive to work outside that area because of travel and lodging costs."

"While new tax credits and incentives have been put in place in Alabama, California, Hawaii, Illinois, Louisiana, New Mexico, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and New York to encourage the movie and television producers to film there, that has not been the case in Connecticut," Representative Miller said. "Although Connecticut has had a sales tax exemption in place since 1997 for the sale and production of television and radio programs and or the sale and lease of production equipment used for commercial entertainment, advertising and educational media, other states offer more attractive

benefits, including 100 percent hotel room tax credits for long crew stays and multi-million dollar grants.”

“These are the kinds of incentives we should make available if we want to lure film production companies here,” said Representative Miller, whose bill would exempt from the state sales tax the rent received for extended stays in hotel rooms by film crews.

“In 2003 the film industry spent \$12.4 million in Connecticut. In 1997, the film and media industry generated \$549 million in personal income and accounted for 8,424 jobs,” Representative Miller said. “If our state was friendlier toward movie and television film producers, we could attract more movie-makers to Connecticut, which would create thousands of new jobs and be of significant benefit to our economy.”